



Arlington Human Rights Commission Minutes

Date: Wednesday December 16, 2020

Time: 8:00 PM- 10:00 PM

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by registering to receive the meeting info and using the telephone dial-in information provided.

Please read Governor Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provision of Open Meeting Law for more information regarding virtual public hearings and meetings:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-meeting-law-order-march-12-2020/download>

Attendees: Co-chairs Grossman and Bauer, Commissioners Rogers, Haynes, Pusey, Soneja, Brown, Jolin, Minton, Horowitz, Carney, Baron

DEI Office - Christina Coleman

Interns: Annika Benn, Tessa Erbe

APD representative: Chief Flaherty

Community Members: Rebecca Gruber, Diane Connor, Anna Litten

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:00pm by Co-chair Bauer

Land acknowledgement by Co-chair Grossman

1. Co-Chair Report
 - a. Incident coverage & coffee chat sign-ups done
 - b. Try to work toward 1st Saturday of every month for coffee chats
 - c. Meeting with other Comm co-chairs, continuing to reach out to Diversity Task

Group co-chairs, met with Chief of APD and heard about the proposed advisory council, bodycams, and her support of State legislation on police reforms

- d. Met with several candidates for the Commissioner opening and forwarded names to the Moderator. Hoping to have it filled for January
 - e. Co-chair Bauer listed the documents needed for the binder
 - f. Co-chairs met with Town Manager, discussed equity action plan
 - g. Annual report will be completed this month, report presented at the recent Special Town meeting was shared
2. Review of Minutes
- a. A motion to accept the October monthly minutes was made by Commissioner Soneja, seconded by Commissioner Pusey, accepted unanimously.
3. Review of Community Input
- a. Email from Wynelle Evans was discussed. Specific key issues included: encouraging reaching out to minority residents to include them in all town commissions and departments as well as minority owned businesses, focusing on equity in Town housing and addressing concerns raised by the Suffolk University study and equity in the schools, and encouraging coordination and more resources for the Commission. It was noted that these are all issues that the Commission has been working on and suggested that as our work continues we keep these concerns in mind.
4. Budget – No updates
5. Retreat follow-up
- a. It was noted that during the last two meetings we discussed retreat goals concerning rules and regulations and engaging the community. We will need to keep in mind that goals need to be realistic and manageable. During the last part of the retreat, the following goals were identified, and the Commission will need to continue to look at these:
 - i. Ensuring that the structure is adequate. This includes continued documentation of the incident/complaint process or revising it, and revising the by-laws prior to the Spring 2022 Town Meeting
 - ii. Inreach/Outreach with specific elements that included focusing on visibility, connections, community, incident response and developing liaisons to key town organizations
 - iii. Maximizing impact that focuses on responding to incidents, events, and how we take care of/uplift others
 - b. It was suggested that in the new year, the Commission considers turning these aspirations into more measurable goals and could begin by asking each working group to do so.
6. Indigenous People's Day
- a. Draft Town proclamation for presentation at Select Board, presented to Town Counsel suggested to change Resolution to Proclamation
 - b. Draft Warrant Article for Town Meeting: use non-Native American imagery, replace Columbus Day with IPD, encourage land acknowledgement

- c. Motion by Commissioner Pusey to accept Proclamation and warrant articles, seconded by Commissioner Soneja. Unanimous approval.
 - d. Noted that the School Committee voted to retire the Menotomy Hunter, but some of these images still exist as discussed in the Schools and Education Working Group.
 - e. Next steps include submitting the article, planning events to support passage and increase understanding throughout Town and publicizing through the Newsletter.
- 7. Equity Action Plan
 - a. The drafted letter includes: revision of employee handbook, memorializing civil rights/BLM in Arlington, and periodic review.
 - b. Motion to empower Commissioner Jolin to draft letter with input from the commissioners and allowing the co-chairs final approval, made by Commissioner Pusey, seconded by Commissioner Brown, accepted with unanimous approval.
- 8. Climate Change Introduction
 - a. Commissioner Soneja presented on how climate change impacts marginalized people and how quickly climate change is taking place.
 - b. Discussion of the role of the Commission and schools in this and the intersection between climate change and human rights followed.
 - c. The Commission agreed to incorporate the climate fight into the Commission's action items and to incorporate climate change into both Earth Day events and the newsletter
- 9. Digital Archive Project: Presented by Anna Litten (Assistant Director of Robbins library)
 - a. COVID archive: stories, pictures about life in COVID/Arlington
 - b. Great way to elevate voices of color in Arlington
 - c. Working on a project called "Elevating Arlington's Voices of Color", archival project to be ongoing
 - d. Working with Cecily Miller from Arlington Public Art
 - e. Launching a story workshop with Lynette Benton, inviting Arlingtonians of color, starting in February
 - f. Arlington Reads book: "Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" by Beverly Daniel Tatum, who will also be speaking
 - g. AHRC's "Double Take" is on ACMi and could be added
- 10. Review to co-sign letter re Superintendent Search Process
 - a. Commissioner Haynes summarized concern expressed by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee, which is submitting a letter to the Arlington School Committee; they would like the AHRC to sign on to the letter.
 - b. Motion to create a draft letter, rather than signing on to this letter was made since not all Commissioners agreed with every aspect of the original letter, describing the lack of transparency in part of the process and noting that the two candidates were not treated equitably passed with 11 yes, with Commissioner Minton abstaining.

11. Review of Working Groups

- a. Outreach
 - i. Worked to include a DEI focus in the Envision Arlington survey, with 4 questions added
- b. Communication
 - i. Upcoming newsletter featuring MLK Day, Black History month
- c. Schools and Education
 - i. Co-chair Grossman is continuing to reach out to the CIAA sub-committee
 - ii. The Working Group is now meeting on the second Monday of the month at 5pm
 - iii. The school resource document made by the AHRC Interns is being shared through the Ottoson Middle School principal
 - iv. Discussed the AHS Human Rights Club and talked about ways clubs can interact with climate change, MLK Day of service, Reclaim your vote, and the Events WG. WG also discussed Involving the APS schools in DEI issues (advisory, ASPIRE, etc.).
- d. Events
 - i. Commissioner Haynes reported that the social media takeover went well for Indigenous People's Day. A housing event is planned for Dec. 21. The MLK week of service was approved, and the WG is working on a Difficult Conversations event.
 - ii. The WG is also actively planning the banners for Black History Month.
 - 1. A motion to allow for banners to be selected by Commissioner Haynes, second by Commissioner Carney, accepted by unanimous approval.
 - 2. Co-sponsorship form – Reviewed. Recommendation to add a question to request total funding requirement and alternate sources of funding. Recommendation accepted and form adopted.
- e. Bylaws
 - i. Rules and Regulations finalized with the change that outside groups may conduct sales at events under certain defined situations.
- f. BLM Group – No updates

12. Incidents

- a. Chief Flaherty provided a training update that included courses regarding police legitimacy, de-escalation, communication, and implicit bias. Noted COVID restrictions have caused in-person training to be cancelled.
- b. Working with VISIONS to develop Professional Development training related to unconscious and implicit bias.
- c. Connected with Empathetics to talk about training opportunities based on neuroscience and emotional recognition; they have worked with the Wellesley Police Department.
- d. Commissioners Jolin and Soneja met with Captain Flynn to go over the incident reports. Commissioner Soneja recapped the incident log of 46 cases. The

commission discussed releasing a visual to include in a press release of incidents this year.

13. Housing Issues

- a. Town forum planned for the week following the Commission meeting

14. Announcements: None

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Baron, seconded by Co-Chair Bauer and unanimously approved.

Next meeting: January 20, 2020, 8:00 pm, Remote Participation.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact Jillian Harvey, jharvey@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.